

**General Assembly**

Distr.: General
3 November 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session

Agenda items 13, 117 and 134

**Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up
to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and
summits in the economic, social and related fields**

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

**Revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in
General Assembly resolution 70/290, entitled “High-level
plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing
large movements of refugees and migrants”**

**Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and
Budgetary Questions**

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/71/345) in which he provides details as to the additional budgetary requirements resulting from the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 70/290, on the basis of draft resolution A/70/L.54, regarding the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. The Secretary-General seeks the Assembly's approval of an additional appropriation, representing a charge against the contingency fund, in the amount of \$305,000 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 10 October 2016.

Application of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly: rule 153

2. As indicated in the report, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted a statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.54 (A/70/967), in



which he informed the Assembly that the implementation of the requests contained in the draft resolution would give rise to additional resource requirements in the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. The report also indicates that "before the adoption of the resolution, the President of the Assembly drew the attention of the Assembly to the statement of programme budget implications and noted that the Fifth Committee would examine the revised estimates resulting from the draft resolution during the main part of the seventy-first session of the Assembly. Consequently, the financial provisions, as appropriate, would be considered as an additional budget appropriation to be approved by the Assembly for the biennium 2016-2017 (see A/70/PV.108)" (A/71/345, para. 2). The Advisory Committee notes that the statement on the programme budget implications was submitted to the Assembly immediately prior to the adoption of the draft resolution.

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly reads as follows: "No resolution involving expenditure shall be recommended by a committee for approval by the General Assembly unless it is accompanied by an estimate of expenditures by the Secretary-General. No resolution in respect of which expenditures are anticipated by the Secretary-General shall be voted by the General Assembly until the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee) has had an opportunity of stating the effect of the proposal upon the budget estimates of the United Nations." The Committee notes that, in his statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/70/L.54 (A/70/967), the Secretary-General draws the attention of the Assembly to the fact that "if the Assembly were to adopt the draft resolution at its seventieth session, the present statement of programme budget implications would be reissued as a revised estimate for the seventy-first session. The Fifth Committee will examine, during the main part of the seventy-first session of the Assembly, both the revised estimate arising from the draft resolution and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon" (A/70/967, para. 10). **In this regard, the Advisory Committee notes that the language used by the Secretary-General in his statement on the programme budget implications (A/70/967, para. 10) implies a decision by the General Assembly that would not be in strict compliance with rule 153. The Advisory Committee stresses that it is incumbent upon the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure that the rules of procedure are respected so as to enable the Assembly to make informed decisions upon consideration of draft resolutions, including their related financial implications.**

Resource requirements

4. In his report, the Secretary-General states that the activities by which the requests contained in paragraphs 1 and 11 of General Assembly resolution 70/290 would be implemented would consist of a plenary meeting and six interactive multi-stakeholder round tables. The plenary meeting would consist of an opening plenary meeting, two parallel plenary meetings and a closing plenary meeting. Accordingly, the opening plenary meeting, the parallel plenary meetings and the closing plenary meeting would require eight meetings with interpretation in all six languages and verbatim records, of which two meetings would be covered from existing entitlements of the Assembly. In addition, the six interactive multi-stakeholder round tables would require six meetings with interpretation in all six

languages but would not have verbatim records. Accordingly, a total of 14 meetings would take place on 19 September 2016. Thus, a total of 12 meetings with interpretation in all six languages and a total of 6 meetings with verbatim records in all six languages would constitute an addition to the meetings workload for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management in 2016. This would entail additional requirements for meetings services in the amount of \$72,000 and for verbatim services in the amount of \$186,000 in 2016. A related report would entail additional requirements for documentation services in the amount of \$47,000 in 2016. **Given the availability of standard cost parameters for meeting servicing, the Advisory Committee is concerned that such information could not be made available to the General Assembly at an earlier stage.**

5. The report indicates that no provisions have been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 for the implementation of the activities requested under paragraphs 1 and 11 of the resolution. The Secretary-General stated that, as it was not possible to identify activities within section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium, it was therefore necessary that additional non-recurrent resources in the amount of \$305,000 be provided through an additional appropriation for the biennium 2016-2017.

6. The Advisory Committee raised a number of concerns relating to the cost estimates and the costing methodology. These include: the methodology of calculating interpretation services in all six official languages; the use of a daily rate rather than a rate per meeting; and the assumption that interpretation services would be hired externally. With respect to the cost parameters for the production of a United Nations document and for the interpretation into the six official languages, the Advisory Committee was provided with detailed information on such costs in 2016 (see A/71/549, annex II).

7. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that it was not possible to report on the actual expenditure for the activities requested in resolution 70/290, since the current financial system does not enable activity-based expenditure reporting. Nevertheless, the Committee received confirmation that all mandated activities took place as foreseen and that, consequently, the estimated amount of \$305,000 was fully spent. The Committee notes that a breakdown of actual expenditures and related activities could not be provided at the time of its review (see also A/71/390).

8. **The Advisory Committee recommends, in view of the considerations mentioned in paragraphs 7 and 8, that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to absorb the additional requirements in the amount of \$305,000 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.**